

REMARKS

Claims 19-42 are pending in this application. Applicant has amended claims 29, 34, 35, 38, and 42. Applicant respectfully submits that these amendments put the claim in better condition for appeal.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner has rejected claims 29 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. Applicant has amended these claims to address the concerns of the Examiner.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 19-23 and 35-42 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Microsoft Project 98. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Claims 19-23 are directed to a graphical representation of project data. The representation displays a task as a graphical element, which a user can customize on a "task-by-task basis." Upon selection of a task to be formatted, a user is able to change the format of the graphical element on an individual task basis, irrespective of other related tasks.

Microsoft Project 98 in contrast allows user to change the style of a bar or a box representing a task on a "category-by-category basis," and not on a "task-by-task basis." The Examiner cites the use of a "Bar Styles" or "Box Styles" dialog box in Microsoft Project 98 "for specifying a style of a bar in a Gantt chart or of a box in a PERT chart." The bars in the Gantt chart represent a category of tasks (e.g. "normal" or "critical" tasks). (See page 711, "Selecting the Tasks that Display the Bar.") Likewise, the boxes in the PERT chart represent a category of tasks, as shown in Figure 21.21 on page 721 and in the accompanying text: "First choose the type [category] of task to change, and then choose a style and color for the box." The graphical elements, contained either in a Gantt or PERT

chart display, are only customizable by category. Microsoft Project 98 neither teaches nor suggests customizing individual tasks.

Claims 35-42 are directed to a computer-readable medium containing instructions for controlling a computer system to customize a graphical representation of project data. The tasks are displayed as graphical elements in the graphical representation. A user is able to select a category of tasks and change a graphical element representing a category of tasks from a "first shape format" to a "second shape format."

Microsoft Project 98, on the other hand, allows a user to "change the borders for different categories of tasks using the Borders tab on the Box Styles dialog box." (See Page 721, item 2 and Figure 21.21.) For example, a user may wish to represent a category of tasks with a box having a dashed line border and another category of tasks with a box having a bolded line border. However, a user of Microsoft Project 98 is unable to change the "shape" of the graphical elements as recited by these claims.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected independent claims 19-34 under 35 U.S.C § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schanel in view of Harmon, Harmon and Selfridge, or Harmon and Kunar. The Examiner states that the motivation to combine Schanel and Harmon is an indication from Harmon that "these programs as a class, have enjoyed substantial commercial success" (Column 1, lines 38-39). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Harmon is directed to a system for generating the temporal relationship between tasks in a project. Harmon's system "obviates the need for the user to explicate the sequential relationships of the tasks" (Column 1, lines 48-52), which "substantially simplifies the task of the user in generating charts indicating the routing and time relationships between the tasks" (Column 2, lines 36-40), "relieving the user of the task of thinking out the specifics of the project" (Column 2, lines 42-43). Therefore, a user would

utilize Harmon's system to **simplify** the burden of generating a representation of project data.

Schanel is directed to a graphics system having data fields and object placement control. Schanel allows a user to create an object on a chart and later move the object, retaining the information associated with the object. (Schanel, Figures 2 and 3.)

The Examiner does not provide a sufficient suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of Schanel and Harmon. The Examiner's suggestion that one would be motivated to combine Harmon and Schanel because systems like Harmon enjoyed substantial commercial success is misplaced. Applicant respectfully submits that if a system is already enjoying "substantial commercial success" one would not be motivated to modify the system for fear of jeopardizing that commercial success. There is no support in the law for the position that commercial success of a system by itself is sufficient motivation to combine that system with any teaching.

Moreover, there is no specific suggestion or teaching in Harmon that would motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to employ the object placement control of Schanel with Harmon's system. Harmon aims to lessen the burden of users developing project data representations, teaching away from the Schanel system of providing **additional** user functionality to control the placement of elements in graphics programs. Thus, the combining of Schanel with Harmon would defeat a primary objective of Harmon.

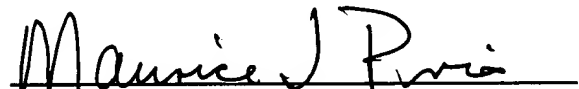
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Based on the above amendment remarks, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and its early allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-8548.

Respectfully submitted,

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